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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/837,610 | 04/19/2001 | Andreas Schuhbaeck | 951/49710 | 8053 |

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

NGUYEN, KHIEM M

[REDACTED] ART UNIT [REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

2839

DATE MAILED: 08/21/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| Application No. 09/837610 Examiner K. NGUYEN | Applicant(s) SCHUBAECK Group Art Unit 2839 |
|---|---|

- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address -

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE - 3 - MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- Responsive to communication(s) filed on 7/24/03
- This action is FINAL.
- Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- Claim(s) 1 - 25 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) 13 - 14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- Claim(s) 1-12, 15 - 25 is/are rejected.
- Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- Claim(s) 13 - 14 are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

- The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.
- The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner
- The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).
- All Some* None of the:
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received
in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892 Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948 Other _____

Office Action Summary

Art Unit:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Upon further considerations of applicant's remarks to the restriction requirements, claims 15-25 drawn to a method of coupling optical ferrules will be examined along with the elected article claims. However, claims 13-14 drawn to a process for producing a belt having optical ferrules are still under restriction requirements (see previous office action).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-12, 15-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over admitted prior art (APA) in view of Hornung (5,954,539) and Sonoda (4,466,692).

The APA optical ferrules discussed in the background of the instant invention lack the claimed arrangement of several plastic ferrules with at least one connection section, wherein at least two ferrules are connected with one another by the at least one connection section, and wherein a plurality of mutually connected ferrules form a belt.

Art Unit:

Hornung discloses plastic ferrules connected by together to form a belt (see figure 12).

Sonoda discloses interconnected ferrules forming a belt (see figures 11-13).

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skilled in the art to provide or construct the APA optical ferrules with at least one connection section, wherein at least two ferrules are connected with one another by the at least one connection section, and wherein a plurality of mutually connected ferrules form a belt in view of the teachings of Hornung and Sonoda.

The above belt feature would allow for the handling and manufacturing of multiple optical ferrules simultaneously as is well known in the manufacturing art. Regarding the specific shape or construction of the belt arrangement are deemed obvious design varriations and that it would also have been obvious to form the belt into specific shape based on the selection of various molds.

Art Unit:

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Khiem Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 308-1738.

Khiem Nguyen
KHIEM NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

K.N.

August 11, 2003